

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions (and listings) of claims without prejudice in the application.

Listing of Claims

1-18 (canceled)

19. (currently amended) In a contract manufacturing framework, a method of providing access to services comprising:

providing a database including a request for proposal ("RFP") mechanism, a nondisclosure agreement mechanism, a plurality of service provider data structures and a plurality of manufacturer data structures, wherein each service provider data structure includes a description of service provided by a particular service provider, and wherein each manufacturer data structure includes a description of offerings of a particular manufacturer;

identifying a particular data structure based on a request for proposal from a user utilizing the request for proposal mechanism, wherein the user is a service provider or a manufacturer;

receiving nondisclosure agreement data from the user wherein the nondisclosure agreement data is based on a nondisclosure agreement initiated with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism that is independently accessible by both the user and a third party using the contract manufacturing framework to initiate the nondisclosure agreement;

storing the nondisclosure agreement data in the database with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism for later retrieval of the nondisclosure agreement data; and

affording network-based project management services to the user based on the request for proposal and the identified data structure, wherein affording project management services includes managing assets in a network-based supply chain,

including optimizing use of service provider assets and manufacturer assets and providing maintenance and service of service provider assets and manufacturer assets.

20. (previously presented) A method as recited in claim 19, further including the step of tracking a status of manufacturing processes performed by the identified service provider.
21. (previously presented) A method as recited in claim 19, further including the step of allowing the user to inquiry service engineers.
22. (previously presented) A method as recited in claim 19, further including the step of allowing the user to inquiry service chemists.
23. (previously presented) A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the database is accessed utilizing the Internet.
24. (canceled)
25. (currently amended) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for providing supply chain/workflow services in a contract manufacturing framework comprising:

a code segment for providing a database including a request for proposal ("RFP") mechanism and a plurality of service provider data structures and a plurality of manufacturer data structures, wherein each service provider data structure includes a description of service provided by a particular service provider, and wherein each manufacturer data structure includes a description of offerings of a particular manufacturer;

a code segment for identifying a particular data structure based on a request for proposal from a user utilizing the request for proposal mechanism, wherein the user is a service provider or a manufacturer;

a code segment for receiving nondisclosure agreement data from the user wherein the nondisclosure agreement data is based on a nondisclosure agreement initiated

with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism that is independently accessible by both the user and a third party using the contract manufacturing framework to initiate the nondisclosure agreement;

a code segment for storing the nondisclosure agreement data in the database with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism for later retrieval of the nondisclosure agreement data; and

a code segment for affording network-based project management services to the user based on the request for proposal and the identified data structure, wherein affording project management services includes managing assets in a network-based supply chain, including optimizing use of service provider assets and manufacturer assets and providing maintenance and service of service provider assets and manufacturer assets.

26-30. (canceled)

31. (currently amended) In a contract manufacturing framework, a method of providing access to services comprising:

logic for providing a database including a request for proposal ("RFP") mechanism and a plurality of service provider data structures and a plurality of manufacturer data structures, wherein each service provider data structure includes a description of service provided by a particular service provider, and wherein each manufacturer data structure includes a description of offerings of a particular manufacturer;

logic for identifying a particular data structure based on a request for proposal from a user utilizing the request for proposal mechanism, wherein the user is a service provider or a manufacturer;

logic for receiving nondisclosure agreement data from the user wherein the nondisclosure agreement data is based on a nondisclosure agreement initiated with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism that is independently accessible by both the user and a third party using the contract manufacturing framework to initiate the nondisclosure agreement;

logic for storing the nondisclosure agreement data in the database with the nondisclosure agreement mechanism for later retrieval of the nondisclosure agreement data; and

logic for affording network-based project management services to the user based on the request for proposal and the identified data structure, wherein affording project management services includes managing assets in a network-based supply chain, including optimizing use of service provider assets and manufacturer assets and providing maintenance and service of service provider assets and manufacturer assets.

32-36. (canceled)

37. (withdrawn) A method for providing a contract manufacturing framework comprising:

- (a) providing a database having information on a plurality of service providers;
- (b) using said database to match a user to a service provider selected from among said plurality of service providers based on services provided by the selected service provider;
- (b) providing supply chain/workflow services for services provided by the service providers;
- (c) allowing the user access to technical services concerning services provided by the service providers utilizing the database; and
- (d) providing transaction services to the user utilizing a request for economic transaction proposal mechanism and a nondisclosure agreement mechanism located on the database.

38. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 37, wherein the step of matching the user to a service provider includes querying the database using request data from the user, identifying particular service provider information based on the request data, and sending the user the identified service provider information.

39. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 37, wherein the step of providing supply chain/workflow services includes identifying particular service provider information based on a request for proposal from the user utilizing the request for proposal mechanism, and affording project management services to the user based on the request for proposal and the identified service provider information.
40. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 37, wherein the step of allowing the user access to technical services includes identifying particular service provider information based on a request data from the user, wherein the particular service provider information includes information concerning process design services, and sending the user data concerning process design services utilizing the identified service provider information.
41. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 37, wherein the step of providing transaction services includes creating a request for an economic transaction proposal utilizing the request for economic transaction proposal mechanism, receiving nondisclosure agreement data from the user, and cataloging the nondisclosure agreement data utilizing a nondisclosure agreement mechanism.
42. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 37, wherein said plurality of service providers is a plurality of chemical contract manufacturing service providers.
43. (withdrawn) A computer readable medium having computer code written therein capable of causing a general purpose computer to implement the method of claim 37.
44. (withdrawn) In a contract manufacturing framework, a method of providing access to services comprising:
 - (a) providing a database including a plurality of service provider data structures, wherein each service provider data structure includes a description of a particular service provider;
 - (b) querying the database using request data from a user;

- (c) identifying a particular service provider data structure from among said plurality of service provider data structures based on the request data, wherein the particular service provider data structure includes information concerning process design services;
 - (d) sending the user information concerning process design services utilizing the identified service provider data structure.
45. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 44, wherein the identified service provider data structure includes information concerning optimization services.
46. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 44, wherein the identified services provider data structure includes information concerning technical experts available for consultation.
47. (withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 44, wherein the technical experts available for consultation include engineering consultation services.